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AUTHOR Fleischman, Howard L.
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ABSTRACT

This document describes various models of vocational training directed specifically at adults with limited English proficiency (LEP). An introduction explains how the information was obtained (through interviews with staff and officials at state agencies that administer such programs in six states). Section 2 presents a conceptual framework of vocational training for adults with LEP, which involves language, vocational, and support services components. Each of the next three chapters explains one of those components in detail. Chapter 6 describes three typical programs and identifies the program practices of each within the overall conceptual framework. A short summary and a nine-item bibliography conclude the document. (CML)

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MODELS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT ADULTS

Howard L. Fleischman

Development Associates, Inc.
2924 Columbia Pike
Arlington, Virginia 22204

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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to describe various models of vocational training directed specifically at limited English proficient (LEP) adults. This description is part of a larger study of vocational education for limited English proficient adults being conducted for the National Assessment of Vocational Education. The overall study will identify the employment and training needs of LEP adults, the extent to which those needs are being met, and the types of services provided.

Information concerning training models was obtained during interviews in six states with officials and staff members of state agencies which administer vocational education programs and other employment-related training efforts. The states were selected because of their large numbers of LEP adults. In addition to interviews at the state level, interviews were also conducted with local agency officials and staff in a large metropolitan area and a small city with significant numbers of LEPs in each of the six states. These interviews were conducted as part of the data collection process for the preparation of case studies of state policy and programs concerning vocational training for LEP adults. In addition to these interviews, information on models of vocational training was obtained from the vocational education and language training literature.

The next section of this report presents a conceptual framework of vocational training for LEP adults. Following that, the three components of the framework are defined and examples are provided of how specific programs can be described within the framework.

II. FRAMEWORK FOR DESCRIBING TRAINING MODELS

The results of the investigation indicated that vocational training for LEP adults varied considerably depending on training objectives, vocational skill area, and needs of the population served. After careful consideration of various training approaches uncovered through the interviews and literature, a conceptual framework for describing the range of vocation training services for LEP adults was developed. This framework, shown on the following page, consists of three major components:

- Language Component;
- Vocational Component; and
- Support Services Component.

Within each component of the framework, there are several practices or approaches. For example, within language component, training may be very general in nature, helping individuals to communicate in English for everyday survival. Alternatively, the language training may be directed at job-seeking skills, or perhaps English vocabulary for a specific vocational field or job.

The vocational component also may take several forms. It may involve instruction in an all-English language environment with a curriculum intended for English-proficient participants and with no accommodations made for LEP individuals. Alternatively, vocational training may involve a curriculum intended for English-proficient students, but with some special language support for LEP participants. This support may involve the use of classroom aides, tutors, or special materials. Another alternative practice is bilingual vocational training, a program of instruction developed specifically for LEP adults. This approach blends the vocational and language curriculum, with vocational training first provided in the native language, transitioning to English as the participants become more proficient in that language. On-the-job training in all English or in the native language is another possibility.

The support services component comprises a number of activities to help program participants. These services range from assessment and screening to determine participants' needs, remedial education to make up for deficiencies in basic

MODELS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND OTHER JOB-RELATED SERVICES FOR LEP ADULTS

Language Component

- ESL
- Pre-Employment VESL
- Occupation-Specific VESL

Vocational Component

- All-English Vocational Training without special language support
- All-English Vocational Training with special language support:
  - (a) Bilingual aide/tutor
  - (b) Monolingual English-speaking aide/tutor
  - (c) Pairing with bilingual participant
  - (d) Pairing with monolingual English speaking participant
  - (e) Learning center for individualized instruction
- Bilingual Vocational Training
- On the Job Training

Support Services Component

- Assessment and Screening
- Basic Skills
- Child Care
- Transportation
- Counseling
- Job Development and Placement
- Other Social and Health Services

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skills, job counseling and placement, and social services such as child care and transportation. Without these supportive activities, individuals may not be able to take full advantage of the language and vocational services provided by programs.

For a vocational training program for LEP adults, the language and vocational components provide the basic elements, while the support services component provides supplementary, yet important, services to participants. The more comprehensive training programs include practices or approaches from all three components; however, many programs are comprised of practices from only one or two of the components.

Within each component of the framework, programs choose practices or activities based on program objectives, needs of participants, staff capabilities, funding levels, and similiar considerations. These practices are not mutually exclusive; programs may implement one or more of them. For example, a program may provide basic English as a second language (ESL) only, or may teach ESL along with pre-employment vocational English as second language.

Not only do programs provide different practices and activities, but they combine them in different ways. First, sequencing of practices or activities vary. For example, across components, language instruction may precede or be concurrent with vocational training; within a component, basic ESL may precede or be concurrent with pre-employment vocational English a second language.

Second, different practices or activities may be provided by a single agency or by multiple agencies. For example, language and vocational instruction may be both provided by a community college; alternatively, the community college may provide vocational training only and refer participants to adult education at the local school district for language instruction.

Third, there are varying levels of coordination among practices and activities. In some cases, the language and vocational curriculums may be tied closely together with instructors interacting regularly to coordinate their lessons. In other instances, language and vocational instruction is provided completely independently of each other.

Finally, the interviews and literature review suggested that there are no uniform standards for specific practices and activities relative to hours of instruction, teacher credentials, student-teacher ratios, and the like. These standards depend on training objectives, the target population, the needs of the community, the local employment situation, employer needs, available funding, and the interests of officials and staff members of local educational and job training agencies.

The three major components of the framework for describing the training models are discussed in the next sections of this report.

III. LANGUAGE COMPONENT

The language component of a vocational training program for limited-English proficient adults may consist of one or more of the following practices:

- English as a Second Language (ESL);
- Pre-Employment Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL); or
- Occupation-Specific VESL.

These practices are not mutually exclusive and may overlap to some extent. Programs may provide one, or more of these practices. Further, if more than one is taught, they most likely are not equally emphasized. One may be the primary focus, with the other(s) of secondary importance, depending on overall program objectives.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

English as a Second Language is a broad, generic term for the practice of teaching English to individuals who were raised in homes in which other languages were spoken. ESL encompasses both speaking and reading instruction and utilizes a range of different instructional approaches. Frequently, instructors adopt an eclectic approach to instruction to meet the needs of the students in their classroom. Thus, the nature of the instruction depends on the needs of the target group and their level of English proficiency.

Adult immigrants and refugees with no English skills at all are in need of basic English language skills to function in American society. Thus, a program for this group must address their immediate need for survival relative to oral communication. The specific content of the ESL program will then depend on the initial level of language competency of the participants in English and in their native language(s), the language and communication needs identified, the time required and available to attain various language skills, and the learning approach preferred by the instructor or the sponsoring agency or institution. Instructional objectives may range from very basic English language skills to fairly high proficiency levels.

Pre-Employment Vocational English as a Second Language

Pre-employment VESL is a special type of ESL program designed specifically to address the needs of individuals for minimum competency in English relative to obtaining entry-level employment. This includes job-hunting skills such as reading classified advertisements, calling for an interview appointment, filling out a job application, and interviewing skills. It may also include public transportation use and on-the-job behavior.

Occupation-Specific Vocational English as a Second Language

The purpose of occupation-specific VESL is to provide job-specific language instruction in a given vocational area. The focus of this instruction is on the vocabulary and grammar of a specific occupation or job. Occupation-specific VESL is almost always provided in conjunction with vocational training and, to be most effective, the language instruction should be coordinated with that training.

IV. VOCATIONAL COMPONENT

Vocational training for LEP adults may be categorized according to the following practices or approaches:

- All-English Vocational Training Without Special Language Support;
- All-English Vocational Training With Special Language Support consisting of one or more of the following:
    a) Bilingual aide,
    b) Monolingual English-speaking aide,
    c) Pairing with bilingual participant,
    d) Pairing with monolingual English-speaking participant,
    e) Learning center for individualized instruction;
- Bilingual Vocational Training; and
- On-the-Job Training.

These practices are described below.

All-English Vocational Training Without Special Language Support

This practice is actually regular vocational education designed for the general population. No special services are employed for the LEP adult, and no special materials are available. Limited English proficient adults who apply for entry to these programs frequently are directed to ESL programs offered by the sponsoring agency or by another agency. They must meet certain language criteria before they are accepted into vocational training. When these criteria are met, individuals are mainstreamed into regular vocational training classes. Language instruction may or may not continue depending on personal needs, interests, or desires.

All-English Vocational Training With Special Language Support

This practice consists of regular vocational education designed for the general population, but with special accommodations made to help the LEP participant. Special services may include a bilingual or monolingual English speaking aide in the classroom to help supplement and clarify the instruction provided by the

English-speaking instructor. This allows for more individualized instruction for the LEP student than the regular student would receive. Another approach is to pair the LEP student with another student who is bilingual or perhaps monolingual English speaking. In this case, the bilingual helper can translate and clarify the instructor's lessons and other material for the LEP student; the monolingual English speaking helper can work one-on-one with the LEP student and provide individualized attention to that individual which a single instructor cannot. It should be remembered that the LEP students enrolled in vocational training generally have some ability to communicate in English, having been enrolled in ESL or VESL previously or concurrently with their vocational classes. In addition to classroom aides or pairing of students, other special services include the use of tutors to provide extra individualized instruction, and materials translated into the students' native language.

Another special service provided by some programs is a learning or resource center for individualized instruction. This center allows students to seek remedial help via programmed instructional materials, sometimes computer assisted and sometimes using audio-visual aids. The learning center is usually designed for all students who need extra help, not specifically for LEP students. One criticism of this approach is that LEP students need to practice oral communication in English. The individualized learning approach does not allow this.

Bilingual Vocational Training (BVT)

Bilingual vocational training is a comprehensive program specifically designed for the LEP population. The central element of the program is the provision of vocational training using the native language initially, and transitioning to English as the participants learn the language. Because the native language is used, this approach is only appropriate for classes in which all participants speak the same native language. Special instructional materials are used, designed specifically for LEP students. Instructors are bilingual in English and the participants' native language. During the period of transition from the native

language to English, both languages may be used, switching from one to the other, to clarify instruction. In some cases, however, when only monolingual English speaking instructors are available, they are paired with bilingual classroom aides.

English language training is coordinated with the vocational training. Language instruction is likely to be occupational-specific VESL, although the instruction may begin with survival-level ESL or pre-employment VESL. Support services such as recruitment and assessment, employment counseling, and job placement are also provided as part of a comprehensive BVT program.

On-the-Job Training

On-the-job training involves placement of an individual with an employer in the community for the purpose of learning a skill or occupation. It is used frequently by Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs. As opposed to a classroom environment, training is provided in a work environment. Skills are learned by actual performance of a specific job, and with the specific tools and machines used for that job. On-the-job training situations are frequently established with the intention that the trainee will become a regular employee of the company which provides the training. Training may be provided by a monolingual English speaker if the trainee was enrolled in ESL or VESL prior to participation in OJT. However, some employers used bilingual foremen to train OJT participants and to supervise them after training is completed and they are hired as employees.

V. SUPPORT SERVICES COMPONENT

Supplementary services to support the vocational and language training components may include the following:

- Assessment and Screening;
- Basic Skills;
- Child Care;
- Transportation;
- Employment Counseling;
- Job Development and Placement; and
- Other Social and Health Services.

The specific support services provided depends on a program's objectives, participants' needs, services provided by other agencies or programs in the community, and available funds. The more comprehensive and better funded programs generally provide more support services, while others provide a more limited selection.

Assessment and Screening

Entrance criteria are different for each program. Therefore, assessment and screening efforts vary considerably. Among the areas included in the assessment process are vocational interests and aptitudes, English and native language proficiency, and basic skills. A wide range of diagnostic instruments are used to measure these aptitudes and abilities, upon which acceptance and placement decisions are made. For example, a particular vocational training program may require a certain level of English language proficiency. If an individual meets the standard, he or she is accepted into the program; if not, he or she is placed into an ESL class until the entrance standard can be met.

Basic Skills

Basic skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic) is an area in which LEP adults are frequently found to require remedial help. These skills are required for success in a wide range of vocational areas, and many programs offer instruction in this

area. Frequently, instruction is individualized using programmed instructional booklets or computer-assisted instruction, and is provided in an instructional or resource center designed to serve all students who require extra instruction.

Child Care

Child care is an area of concern to adults in need of employment-related training. A significant number cannot afford to pay for this service and would be unable to enroll in training if programs did not provide help. Some programs partially reimburse participants for child care; others provide the service directly.

Transportation

Many LEP adults in need of employment-related training do not have cars and are unable to afford the transportation expenses involved in getting to the training center. Some programs reimburse participants for their travel, while some others operate van pools to transport participants to the center.

Counseling

Counseling is another important support service offered by some programs. For the most part, the types of counseling relate to employment opportunities and vocational choice. Some programs also provide counseling relative to immigration issues, health services, public assistance, and other social services. Frequently, programs offer help with completing financial aide forms and applications for public assistance.

Job Development and Placement

Many programs have job developers on their staff who help place trainees in jobs. Generally, these are the programs which emphasize vocational training. Programs which provide ESL or VESL only (no vocational training) are less likely to provide job placement services. Since one of the important measures of the success of vocational training is job placement and job retention, job development and

placement is an important service. Some programs have staff members working full-time on this activity in order to keep in regular contact with the employers in the community so that they can match program completers with appropriate job opportunities.

Another important activity which many programs implement along with their job placement activities is follow-up of program completers for the purpose of evaluating program success. This is done by contacting employers or the former trainees themselves by telephone or through the mail. Information is then collected concerning job retention, increase in wages, satisfaction with training, and suggested improvements to the training program. Another advantage of contacting employers for follow up information is that it keeps the program in contact with the employers in the community for additional placement opportunities in the future.

Other Social and Health Services

In addition to providing counseling relative to the availability of health and social services in the community, some programs offer these services directly. This occurs when programs are sponsored by large agencies which offer a wide range of services.

VI. APPLICATION OF FRAMEWORK: THREE EXAMPLES

This section of the report provides three examples to illustrate how programs may be described. For each example, the practices or activities which are carried out are identified within the overall conceptual framework developed for this report.

Example A

A program for refugees from Southeast Asia in a small town in Illinois offers survival and pre-employment ESL classes and contracts with a local community college for vocational instruction in welding, machine tool, data entry, cosmetology, and commercial housekeeping. The vocational training is provided through specially designed courses using English-speaking instructors and bilingual classroom aides. Separate VESL classes are held in conjunction with each vocational program. In terms of support services, the program helps the refugees obtain food, clothing, and public assistance. Child care and transportation to the training center is provided, and driver training is also offered. Assessment and screening, job counseling, and placement services are offered, and the program does follow-up with both the trainee and employer at 30, 60 and 90 days. The practices and activities implemented by this program are identified by arrows in the framework shown below.

MODELS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND OTHER JOB-RELATED SERVICES FOR LEP ADULTS

Language Component

- ESL
- Pre-Employment VESL
- Occupation-Specific VESL

Vocational Component

All-English Vocational Training without special language support

All-English Vocational Training with special language support:

- (a) Bilingual aide/tutor
- (b) Monolingual English-speaking aide/tutor
- (c) Pairing with bilingual participant
- (d) Pairing with monolingual English speaking participant
- (e) Learning center for individualized instruction

Bilingual Vocational Training

On the Job Training

Support Services Component

- Assessment and Screening
- Basic Skills
- Child Care
- Transportation
- Counseling
- Job Development and Placement
- Other Social and Health Services

Example B

In Texas, a community college in a large metropolitan area offers bilingual vocational training to native Spanish speakers in refrigeration and air conditioning, diesel mechanics, electricity and electrical repairs, and cosmetology. Training is composed of three components: (1) classroom instruction relating to the specific vocational area, provided almost completely in Spanish; (2) laboratory work in which Spanish and English are both used; and (3) VESL instruction in which general English language skills are taught as part of learning the English vocabulary of the specific vocational area. Support services include assessment of English language skills and vocational aptitudes for instructional planning purposes, vocational counseling, and job placement. The practices and activities implemented by this program are identified by arrows in the framework below.

MODELS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND OTHER JOB-RELATED SERVICES FOR LEP ADULTS

Language Component	Vocational Component	Support Services Component
ESL	All-English Vocational Training without special language support	Assessment and Screening
Pre-Employment VESL	All-English Vocational Training with special language support:	Basic Skills
Occupation-Specific VESL	(a) Bilingual aide/tutor	Child Care
	(b) Monolingual English-speaking aide/tutor	Transportation
	(c) Pairing with bilingual participant	Counseling
	(d) Pairing with monolingual English speaking participant	Job Development and Placement
	(e) Learning center for individualized instruction	Other Social and Health Services
	Bilingual Vocational Training	
	On the Job Training	

Example C

At a community college in a small Texas city, LEP adults are referred to the ESL program operated by the adult education department of the local school district. When these individuals meet an accepted level of English proficiency, they can enter the regular vocational classes at the college which are designed for the general population. No special services are available for the adult LEP population. The practices and activities implemented by this program are identified by arrows in the framework below.

MODELS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND OTHER JOB-RELATED SERVICES FOR LEP ADULTS

Language Component

- ESL
- Pre-Employment VESL
- Occupation-Specific VESL

Vocational Component

- All-English Vocational Training without special language support
- All-English Vocational Training with special language support:
  - (a) Bilingual aide/tutor
  - (b) Monolingual English-speaking aide/tutor
  - (c) Pairing with bilingual participant
  - (d) Pairing with monolingual English speaking participant
  - (e) Learning center for individualized instruction
- Bilingual Vocational Training
- On the Job Training

Support Services Component

- Assessment and Screening
- Basic Skills
- Child Care
- Transportation
- Counseling
- Job Development and Placement
- Other Social and Health Services

VII. SUMMARY

In this report, a framework was presented for describing models of vocational training and other employment-related services for LEP adults. The framework is comprised of three components:

- Language Instruction;
- Vocational Training; and
- Support Services.

Within each component, a series of practices or activities was described. Individual programs vary considerably and offer many different combinations of these practices or activities based on program objectives, needs of participants, staff capabilities, funding levels, etc. Practices and activities also differ in the ways they are sequenced, the fact that they may be offered by a single or by several agencies or institutions, and the extent to which they are coordinated.

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